



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

John Dodd (301) 734-5175
Jim Rogers (202) 720-2511

USDA TO CONTINUE TREE TREATMENTS IN NEW YORK FOR ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE

NEW YORK, March 25, 2005—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will treat approximately 78,200 trees susceptible to the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) in New York. APHIS will begin the treatments in early April, as a critical part of its on-going ALB cooperative eradication program's effort to prevent further infestation of this destructive pest.

The trees will be treated with the insecticide imidacloprid, which has displayed promising results in past treatments. APHIS will treat trees in portions of the 132-square mile quarantine area in New York. Program officials plan to treat approximately 18,400 trees in Manhattan; 35,500 in Brooklyn; 19,400 in Queens and 4,900 on Long Island.

Program officials, through the use of certified pesticide applicator contractors, will be treating the soil surrounding the tree, where appropriate, or by injecting the insecticide into the tree through small capsules placed at the base of the tree's trunk, or through a hand-held hydraulic applicator that uses compressed air to inject the insecticide into the tree's trunk. Each site will be closely monitored.

The insecticide is dispersed through the tree's vascular system. This enables the insecticide to reach ALB adults feeding on small twigs and leaves and the larvae feeding beneath the bark of host trees. Imidacloprid is currently used by some lawn service companies to kill lawn grubs and in some domestic pet treatments to kill fleas.

The larvae of the ALB bore into healthy hardwood trees and feed on living tree tissue and heartwood. Later, throughout the summer, adult beetles emerge from exit holes and briefly feed on the leaves and small twigs of host trees. To fight this destructive invader, agriculture officials removed and destroyed more than 7,190 trees in and around New York City and Long Island.

APHIS and its cooperators undertake eradication by imposing quarantines, conducting intensified visual inspections around confirmed sites to delimit infestations, remove infested and high-risk exposed host trees, and chemically treat host trees as part of an area-wide integrated pest management strategy. The goal is to eliminate this destructive insect from New York City and Long Island before it can establish itself elsewhere.

- more -

Residents can assist in the eradication effort by allowing project officials access to their property to treat trees. For more information on the treatment program, call 1-866-265-0301. The public can also help by looking for ALB, which is about 1 to 1.5 inches long, has a shiny jet black body with distinctive white spots and long antennae that are banded with black and white. To report a sighting of this insect, call 1-877-STOP-ALB.

APHIS, USDA's Forest Service, USDA's Agricultural Research Service, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation participate in the ALB cooperative eradication program. For more information, visit the APHIS Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/alb.

#

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "News" button. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type `subscribe press_releases`.